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EXCISE

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ACTION EA 19

INFO GPM 03,SC 01,RSC 01,USIA 12,H 02,NSC 10,L 03,INR 07,P 04,CIA 04,
DOD 01,SP 02,SS 20,NSAE 00,SAH 03,SAL 01,AID 30,NIC 01,RSR 01
/125 W

R 181100Z OCT 67
FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9081
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
CINCPAC FOR POLAD
AMCONSUL DANANG
AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
REVIEWED BY Joan Lyons DATE 1/26/82
PORTIONS DENIED AS INDICATED

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 8867

SUBJ: LOWER HOUSE ELECTIONS: INTERNAL GSF AND TDV PARTY POLITICS

REF : A. SAIGON 8254;

B. SAIGON 8460.

1. LOWER HOUSE ELECTIONS IN SOME PROVINCES WILL PROVE AN INTERESTING TEST OF VARIOUS SAIGON-ORIENTED POLITI-

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CAL GROUPS' ABILITY TO KEEP PROVINCIAL PARTY BRANCHES IN LINE. SOME PROVINCIAL ORGANIZATIONS OF THE CATHOLIC GREATER SOLIDARITY FORCES AND OF THE TAN DAI VIET PARTY, IT APPEARS, MAY BE BALKING AT SUPPORTING CANDI- DATES ENDORSED BY SAIGON HEADQUARTERS.

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2. CATHOLIC GREATER SOLIDARITY FORCES (GSF) [redacted] HAS CONFIDED TO EMBOFF THAT ORGANIZATION WAS BACKING NORTHERN CATHOLICS MAI QUOC THAI, MAC GIAO AND NGUYEN DUY BAO IN BIEN HOA (REF A). THAI IS A BIEN HOA UNION LEADER AND GIAO AND BAO ARE JOURNALISTS ON STAFFS OF CATHOLIC DAILIES HOA BINH AND XAY DUNG. [redacted] III CORPS GSF [redacted] P, ON THE [redacted] WAS ASTONISHED TO LEARN THAT CENTRAL COMMITTEE HAD TOLD EMBOFF THIS. HOP ADMITTED THAT SAIGON LEADERSHIP HAD INDEED BEEN URGING ITS BIEN HOA BRANCH TO ENDORSE THESE THREE, BUT BIEN HOA BRANCH, HE SAID, LIKED NONE OF THEM. RATHER, HE FELT, BIEN HOA GSF WOULD LINE UP BEHIND SAIGON LAWYER NGUYEN KHAC TAN, SAIGON

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MILITARY SECURITY SERVICE MAJOR NGUYEN HUU CHINH AND III CTZ REFUGEE INSPECTOR PHAM GIA THUY. A POSSIBLE FOURTH, HE CONJECTURED, WAS CATHOLIC STUDENT LEADER [redacted]

3. THE BIEN HOA CLERGY HAD MET ONCE TO DISCUSS THE ELECTION, HOP SAID, BUT HAD POSTPONED A DECISION UNTIL A SECOND MEETING A FEW DAYS BEFORE ELECTION DAY. THIS DECISION, IF PAST EXPERIENCE IS ANY GUIDE, WILL DETERMINE BIEN HOA GSF'S ENDORSEMENT. THE LOCAL ORGANIZATION RELIES ON THE SUPPORT OF THE PRIESTHOOD AND IS UNLIKELY TO OPPOSE IT, DESPITE WISHES OF SAIGON LEADERSHIP. ALSO PRESENT IMPASSE MAY BE REGARDED AS A FURTHER INDICATION OF PHILOSOPHICAL DIFFERENCES BETWEEN INTELLECTUALLY-ORIENTED, LAY-DOMINATED AND SOMEWHAT MORE LIBERAL SAIGON LEADERSHIP AND MILITANT, CONSERVATIVE AND CLERGY-DOMINATED RURAL GSF BRANCHES.

4. GSF CENTRAL COMMITTEE AND PROVINCIAL ORGANIZATION ALSO APPEAR TO BE AT LOGGERHEADS IN HAU NGHIA. HIEN

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CLAIMS THAT ORGANIZATION HAS ENDORSED ARVN MEDICAL MAJOR [illegible] DAM, WHILE REPORTS INDICATE THAT NAU NGHIA GSF HAS PROMISED SUPPORT TO MILITARY SECURITY SERVICE SECOND LIEUTENANT DAO THANH BICH.

5. ANOTHER REVEALING TEST OF WILLS SEEMED LIKELY IN LONG AN PROVINCE UNTIL LOCAL FRONT-RUNNER TRAN VAN MEO, THE FAVORITE OF THE PROVINCIAL TAN DAI VIET (TDV) [illegible], WAS ASSASSINATED ON EVENING OF 13 OCTOBER [illegible]. PARTY CENTRAL COMMITTEE HAS ENDORSED GIA DINH DOCTOR HUYNH NGOC PHUONG AND LONG AN LANDOWNER NGUYEN HUU CAN, AND IS SAID TO HAVE BEEN ANNOYED BY LONG AN BRANCH'S LUKEWARM RESPONSE. PROVINCIAL ORGANIZATION OBJECTED THAT PHUONG WAS UNKNOWN IN PROVINCE AND CAN, WHO WAS LONG AN REPRESENTATIVE OF TRUONG DINH DZU IN PRESIDENTIAL RACE, HAD NO PRESTIGE. WITH MEO OUT OF THE RUNNING, LONG AN TAN DAI VIET MAY NOW RECONSIDER ITS REFUSAL TO SUPPORT PHUONG AND CAN.

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